

LIBERTY CALL



Pearl Harbor Submarine Base

A casual stroll through submarine history

(Above) The USS Parche (SS-384) conning tower, located in the Subase Submarine Memorial Park, memorializes the successes of U.S. submarines during World War II. On her first war patrol, USS Parche sank over 30,000 tons of enemy shipping.

(Right) The dive tower stands beside the old Admin building and was constructed in 1932 for the instruction of submarine escape techniques.

(Middle) The Subase Chapel plaque was dedicated Sept. 10, 1944 in honor of the submariners who died in World War II.



Pearl Harbor's Subase steeped in naval history and tradition

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A casual stroll around the Submarine Base (Subase) on Naval Station Pearl Harbor can quickly evolve into a crash course in U.S. Naval submarine history.

The Naval Station itself was authorized in 1908. Dredging of the Pearl Harbor channel entrance began in 1910 and, on Dec. 14, 1911, USS California (CA-6) became the first warship to pass through the new channel into Pearl Harbor.

Early submarines in Pearl Harbor included F-4 (SS-23).

This submarine sank in 305 feet of water only 1.5 miles southwest of Honolulu Harbor on March 25, 1915 with all 21 crewmen lost.

She was recovered with great difficulty five months later and investigators believed a steel plate in her hull had failed. America's entry into World War I quickly overshadowed the tragedy. Her wreckage was towed to a remote corner of the harbor, re-sunk, and forgotten. She still lies at the submarine base at berth Sierra-13.

Below are listed a few historical highlights of Subase.

Building 650 was built as a one-story structure in 1923 to house the air compressor station. It later functioned as the Periscope Shop and is the oldest structure still standing aboard Subase.

Sharkey Theater, an open-air movie house was the first boxing rink in the Territory of Hawaii. Smokers (boxing) were extremely popular in the Navy and prohibited by Territorial law at the time, but, much to the delight of the Sailors, was authorized in 1929.

The dive tower stands beside the old Admin building and was constructed in 1932 for the instruction of submarine escape techniques. It was used for this purpose until 1983, when it was drained and converted into a crow's nest conference room by Rear Adm. Jack Darby. The room atop the tower is called "The House that Jack Built."

The Subase Chapel was dedicated Sept. 10, 1944 in honor of the submariners who died in World War II. The Chapel was built by volunteer craftsmen from the Subase carpenter and building shops. The original colored glass windows were replaced in 1959 by panels fashioned after the original templates. From inside the chapel, a small submarine may be seen in the lower portion of each window.

The ship's bell from the submarine USS Argonaut (SS-166) still hangs in the steeple. Argonaut's crew donated the bell before she left on her third war patrol. She was sunk in action off Rabaul Jan. 10, 1943, with all hands lost. Their ship's

bell still tolls for them, and all other submariners on "eternal patrol."

The magnificent horse-shoe-shaped barracks structure is Paquet Hall, designed to house 1,200 men. It was constructed in 1927-28. A wartime fourth deck, made of timber, was added in 1943 and removed two years later.

The barracks is named after Gunner's Mate First Class Feeman Pacquet Jr., who was awarded the Navy Cross for extraordinary heroism during the 4th war patrol of USS Harder (SS-257). He was still aboard Harder when she was lost in action Aug. 24, 1944, sunk by enemy depth charges during her 6th war patrol.

Lockwood Hall, Building 662, was constructed in 1934. The art deco styled buildings are the architectural treasures of the Submarine Base.

The Submarine Memorial Park was dedicated Oct. 27, 1960 to the crews of the 52 submarines lost during World War II. Between 1941 and 1945, the Submarine Force lost 374 officers and 3,131 enlisted men. Sixteen thousand men actually made war patrols. Their casualty rate of 22 percent was the highest of any branch of the U.S. Armed Forces.

The USS Parche (SS-384) conning tower, located in the Subase Submarine Memorial Park, memorializes the successes of U.S. submarines during World War II. On her first war patrol; USS Parche sank over 30,000 tons of enemy shipping.

The Beeman Center, completed in the spring of 1945, is the Subase recreation center named after Chief Pharmacist Arthur C. Beeman, who was killed by enemy machine gun fire Feb. 4, 1943, while treating a wounded officer on the deck of USS Amberjack (SS-219).

Smallwood Hall enlisted barracks was dedicated in 1968 in memory of MM3(SS) James Smallwood who died in an explosion and fire while charging oxygen aboard USS Sargo (SSN-583) June 14, 1960.

The Polaris A-3 Missiles, presently displayed in several roadside locations, were carried aboard the two-crew POLARIS Submarines that were homeported in Pearl Harbor from 1964 to 1981.

Today, the Submarine Base at Pearl Harbor serves as a major homeport for the submarines of the U.S. and Allied Pacific fleets and has become increasingly strategically important, plus it's also rich with tradition and history of the U.S. Naval Submarine Fleet.

There are many more historical landmarks ready to be discovered at the Subase. For those who are interested in taking the walk and discovering for themselves, can visit <http://www.pearlharbor.navy.mil/navsta/historytrail.html>.



(Above) The Subase Chapel was dedicated Sept. 10, 1944 in honor of the submariners who died in World War II.

(Left) A propeller from a World War II Submarine stands as a monument at the Submarine Base Memorial Park.

(Bottom) A plaque was dedicated to Medal of Honor recipient of World War II Henry Breault.

